

Considering pastoral issues in Ethiopia

Report of an informal learning
'conversation' at ILRI,
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia,
15 July 2010



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Objective 1:

Getting to know each other and the characteristics of this 'community'

Objective 2:

Looking at modalities for learning, sharing and collaborating around a few key areas of importance (current or emerging). How can a partnership add value to current activities?

Session 1: WHO is in this conversation?

9:00 Introductions and 'Tagging' the community

Session 2: Understanding WHY we are having this conversation?

9:15 Setting the Scene and Painting the current picture together

Session 3: Charting the WHAT, HOW, and WHERE of Pastoralist work

9:30 Series of 'mapping' exercises on thematic issues, activities and capacity

10:30-11:00 REFRESHMENT BREAK

Session 4: Discussing SO WHAT?

11:00 Group Exploration on key issues to take forward

Session 5: WHERE to go from here?

12:00 Analysing Communication and Collaboration options for the future

12:30 LUNCH

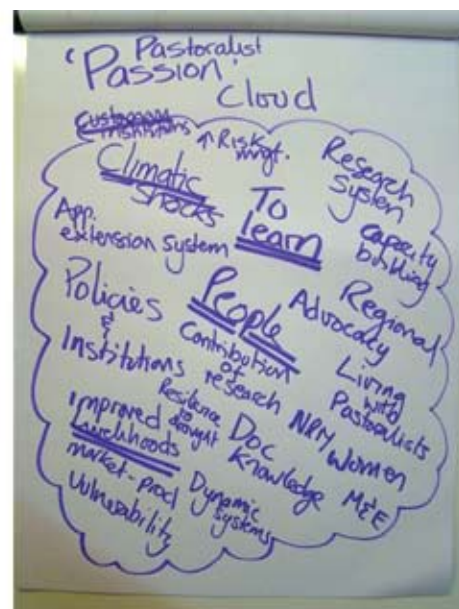
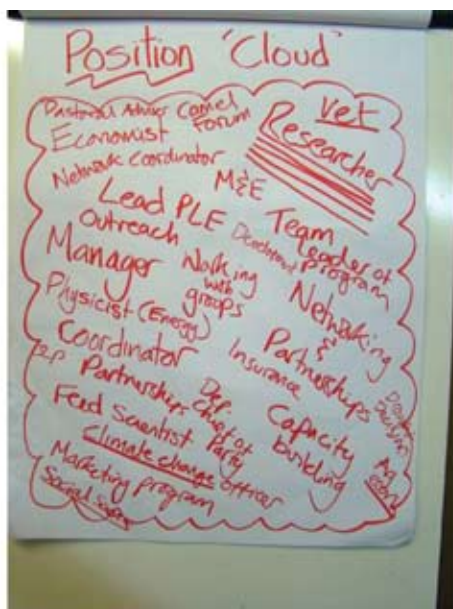
Session 1: Who's in this conversation?

'It is difficult to have a conversation if we do not know who we are talking to'.

So the first step was to do a round of introductions. Each participant was asked to say his/her:

- Name
- Institute
- Role/position
- 'Pastoralist passion'—something that they are really interested in

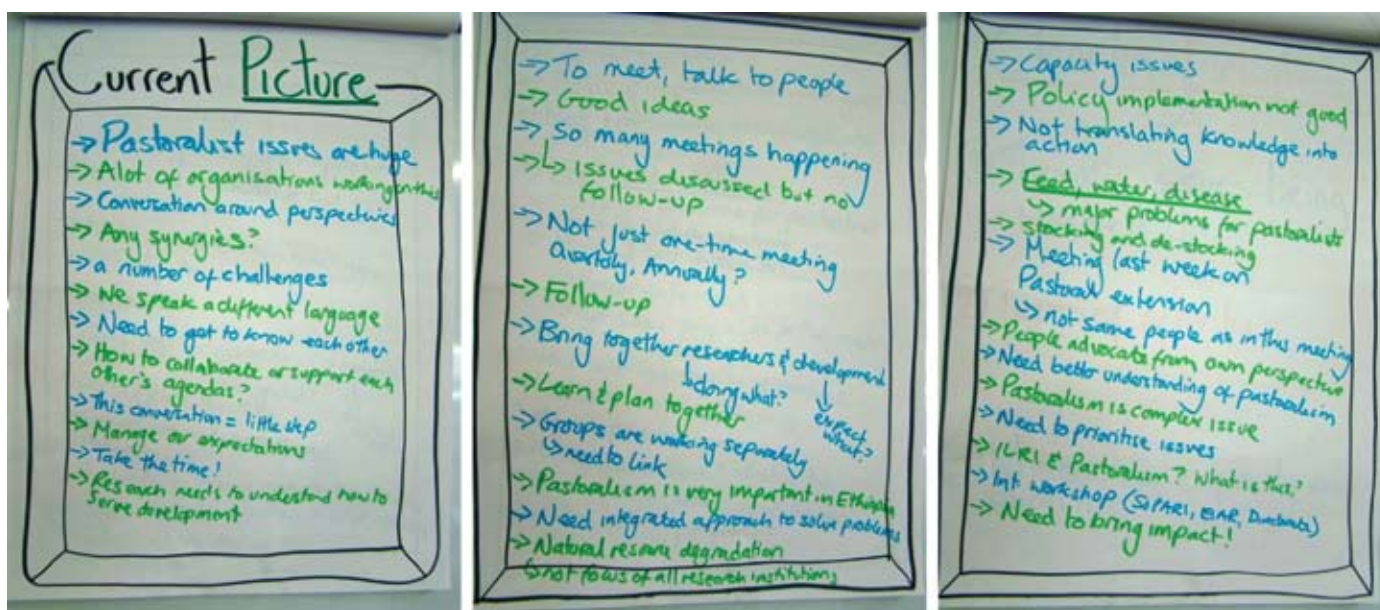
As each person did their introduction, the facilitator captured these four categories on flip charts, using 'tags'—single words or phrases that reflected what was said. As the same thing was said for any of the categories these were underlined—so as to show the repetition.



Session 2: Understanding WHY we are having this conversation?

To frame the conversation, Dr Shirley Tarawali gave some opening remarks about the importance of work on pastoralism and ILRI's interest to support this through research. She did however stress that this was just an open conversation to discuss with others what the issues are at present.

The floor was then opened up for other participants to give their thoughts and views on the 'current picture' of pastoralist work in Ethiopia and the need (if any) for such a conversation.



Session 3: Charting the WHAT, HOW, and WHERE of pastoralists work

A series of charting exercises were introduced as a way of finding out more about what is being done within this pastoralist learning community (and beyond). The three exercises included:

1. Locating your organization on the spider diagram in terms of thematic areas it works on
2. Showing what activities each organization carries out on the bar chart
3. Mapping where the capacity and expertise comes from in the world

Results:



Mapping where the capacity and expertise comes from in the world



Showing what activities each organization carries out on the bar chart

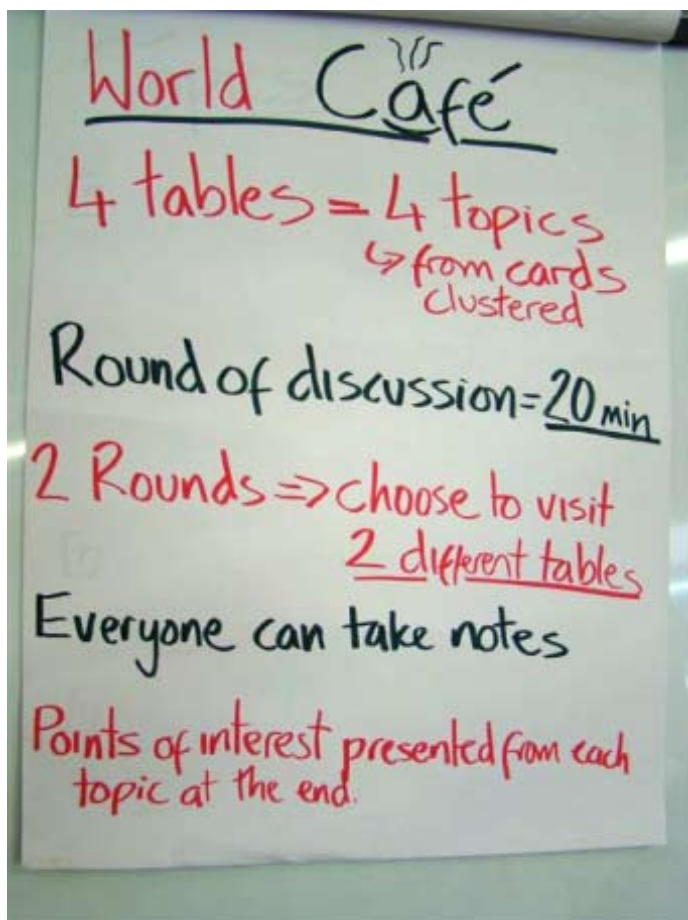
Participants were then asked to take some time to observe the results and write down any observations, thoughts, or issues that they would like to discuss. The cards were collected and clustered into four main topic areas for discussion.

Clustered cards:

Capacity	Thematic gaps	Activity gaps	Coordination and integration
Most of the capacity and expertise are from outside the continent	Few actors are working on education and peace and development thematic areas	Most of the actors are working on research, policy and implementation but fewer on extension	Too many implementers (partners)
Expertise from all over the world	Overlapping themes	A lot on research and policy	Different organizations engaged in different thematic areas
Not much expertise networking with other expertise in North Africa	Only limited number of organizations involved in conflict	Fewer organizations dealing with extension and funding	Activities are not well coordinated among agencies
No capacity building from Somali capacity	Lots being done, how come we know so little or do we already know most of what we need to know?	Research—what is the niche?	FAO is cross-cutting (research, policy, implementation)—how can we integrate them?
Wide range of capacity building and connections outside of Ethiopia	More organizations working on livelihoods, relatively little on conflict, environmental sustainability	Where is the private sector?	Seems that every partner in the room is covering everything—are we stretching too wide?
Most of the support is coming from Europe or America—little or no cross technical support within Africa	Is the term ‘livelihoods’ a catch-all? Do people mean the same thing?	Many working on research but not on extension	With many research actors there should be opportunities for joint research agenda development and proposal development
Significant capacity from universities	Very few organizations working in the area of education and pastoralist health (apart from HIV)	A number of organizations working on research and policy and development	Most organizations work on cross-cutting issues but I doubt if there is coordination and sharing of information
Most capacity not from within Africa		Several organizations working on research, policy, small number working on extension	Kaleidoscope of partners working on the whole range of issues—difficult to focus conversation
There is capacity in the region, also sources of capacity and resources from outside		Everyone is researching something. Is there a bottleneck between generating information and using it in implementation or policy?	Too many ‘coordinators’
		Few extension systems—this affects adaptability	Too many organizations working on the same activities
		Little funding services	We are doing bits of everything
		Good balance in the type of activities—an opportunity to exploit synergy	How well are activities on thematic areas linked in ways that relate to past issues?
		Everybody already doing research	Few regional integration (Horn of Africa)
		Advocacy work is missing—a lot of research being conducted, perhaps with overlap and lack of sharings	
		Few stakeholders working in the area of extension	

Session 4: Discussing SO WHAT?

To discuss the topics identified from the cards we used a World Café approach.



Topics:

Topic 1 = Capacity: not enough in Ethiopia; a lot coming from outside; how to build in the right areas

Topic 2 = Thematic area gaps: education; peace and development/conflict; other

Topic 3 = Activity gaps: extension; how to get knowledge out?

Topic 4 = Coordination and integration: research to development link; everyone is doing a bit of everything

World Café results

Topic 1 = Capacity: not enough in Ethiopia; a lot coming from outside; how to build in the right areas	
<p>Teaching materials (curriculum)</p> <p>Research to be more dynamic</p> <p>Tufts' model is a good idea: coordinate, technical back up; government trust because it is 'honest' broker and quality</p> <p>Lack of capacity in terms of quality research and extension—what are the incentives? How much freedom?</p> <p>Education—wrong model; not practical (Western, not Ethiopian); pastoralist issues ignored, approach is not mobile</p> <p>Neglect of pastoral areas; recent move by government to put infrastructure for university but need collaboration and support</p> <p>Government not really interested in pastoralist viability</p> <p>Lack of incentive package for professionals to work at grass root level</p>	<p>Financial resource (e.g. short-term projects, donor driven, small geographical coverage)</p> <p>Lack of organizational capacity in managing the available resources</p> <p>Lack of technical capacity within the government system to coordinate development efforts</p> <p>Ignorance due to lack of knowledge about pastoral production system</p> <p>Research: cutting and pasting; too expensive to do quality; learning space very little; no link to development or effort to extend (PARIMA an exception?)</p> <p>NGO model unsustainable, need government</p> <p>Targeted research = benefits</p> <p>Cross learning—exploit what capacity there is</p>
Topic 2 = Thematic area gaps: education; peace and development/conflict; other?	
<p>Public-private interactions</p> <p>Microfinance institutions not working in the area</p> <p>Cooperative development</p> <p>Gap is actually about the connections</p> <p>Not allowed to work on conflict, transformation or advocacy on certain issues</p> <p>Climate change research and adaptation = gap</p> <p>Access to knowledge and extension</p> <p>Government institutional gap</p>	<p>Education/peace/conflict resolution not gaps—people are not here</p> <p>Education as climate change adaptation—but needs more schooling</p> <p>Mobile education provision</p> <p>Curriculum not pastoral specific</p> <p>Pastoralism in tertiary education—Alemaya University is working on this</p> <p>Increased focus in curriculum will eventually feed through to policy</p> <p>Research does not keep up with dynamic systems—adaptability and response</p> <p>Customary institutions</p>
Topic 3 = Activity gaps: extension; how to get knowledge out?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extension strategy? One especially for pastoralists? • No clear extension strategy—there are projects that conduct uncoordinated extension. Need to do a situation analysis on extension to come up with strategy • Models imported from highlands • Less understanding of pastoralist system • How to improve livelihoods? • How to utilize resources of pastoralists? • NGO models being tested • Need to learn from other countries • Lack of communication among pastoralists, traders, policymakers and input suppliers etc. in continuous ways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of MFIs and insurance schemes • Women empowerment (gender) • Loose linkage among actors—research, development, academic etc. • Lack of appropriately mandated institute to bring together stakeholders in pastoralist related work—for coordination and networking • Lack of collaborative, action-oriented research • Concrete action to foster market engagement (linking market actors... pastoralist cooperatives in sustainable way) • Lack of pastoral oriented curriculum in the higher education system and TVET-TCs • Unclear policies and legislation on pastoralism

Topic 4 = Coordination and integration: research to development link;
everyone is doing a bit of everything

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural policy in the region is biased towards cropping systems rather than mixed/pastoralist systems • What is the point of entry or the scale of coordination? • Need to identify the thematic areas and have a conversation around the identified issues and coordinate along thematic areas • How do we gather and share the information? • Need integration with regional bodies like AU, IGAD, CEWARN etc. • Government role in coordination, but lack of capacity • Policies on the paper are not implemented on the ground—sometimes biased towards crops • Organizational arrangements to increase market orientation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The point of entry we are talking about depends on the issues • Local pastoralist coordination units in various regions of Ethiopia responsible for coordination but lack the capacity (but FAO funding them) • Pastoralist communities largely cross-border—thus coordination should be seen in that light. Coordination/integration should incorporate these issues • Weak capacity of agricultural research centers in pastoralist areas • Lack of interaction among development actors • Research is basically highland oriented • Little research prioritization, repetition of past research • Private sector is missing from these discussions • Research gaps |
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Session 5: WHERE to go from here?

At the end of the conversation, the participants were asked for any suggestions of options for improved communication and collaboration which could continue such necessary conversations and work towards solving some of the issues identified and discussed.

Due to limited time, only two suggestions were made:

- Developing an institute at national level
- Organizing a small team across a few organizations to continue such conversations and encourage coordination and sharing of knowledge.

A short summary of the conversation was provided by Dr Kidane (EIAR) and words of thanks by Dr Alan Duncan (ILRI), before going for lunch.

Conversation designed and facilitated by Nadia Manning-Thomas

Report compiled by Nadia Manning-Thomas

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Cover photo: Stevie Mann

Editing, design and layout: ILRI Editorial and Publishing Services